

TO THE CHRISTIAN CITIZENS OF LONDON.



We desire to draw your attention to a matter of serious importance as affecting the moral welfare of our city.

Christian people believe that the only hope for the overthrow of the great moral evils of our day lies in vital Christianity; but they often fail to apply its principles in actual practice.

Very soon a time for testing will come, when every Christian voter must decide to which he will be most loyal—his Christian principles or his political party. Let us explain: Last spring the License Commissioners, in face of the seven o'clock closing vote, and despite the plebiscite vote in province and city, extended the hours for the sale of intoxicating liquors. People stood aghast. They could not believe it. To buy votes with money or public works is acknowledged to be very demoralizing, but to purchase votes with the sufferings of innocent women and children is a crime against the highest interests of society.

The Churches and other Christian organizations protested in terms of greatest indignation. What was the result? So far these protests have been treated with silent contempt.

The politicians who have done this are shrewd, far-seeing men, and as Christians we must face the question, How is it that they have dared to so ignore the views of the Christian part of the community so strongly expressed? The answer is plain. They believe that the average Christian will always find some excuse to quiet his conscience and vote for his party, no matter how badly they act.

So this is the estimate in which these clever men hold the professions of Christian people! If their opinion be correct, there is something terribly wrong, for which there will surely come a reckoning day. If we really believe in Christianity as the great power that is to uplift and purify the world, we must at least be as loyal to it as the saloon-keeper is to his interests; but if we endorse, at the polls, the purchase of victory by such foul means as the granting of increased opportunities to the saloon to ruin and destroy many homes, and maybe some of our own children, we shall well deserve the scorn and contempt of these men. Loyalty to principle would win the respect of even our enemies, and would soon make the principles of Christianity the great power in politics that they might and ought to be. To forget, as men have done, religion, country, and even the interests of their own children, in the mad desire to gain a political victory, is not only silly but a crime against God.

But what can be done? For answer let me say that one-fourth of the church members in this city could, if so disposed, purify politics, and compel Christianity to be respected by our politicians. If Christian people do not take some such stand it is easy to see that there is trouble ahead. The worst men only will be able to get into parliament, and the parties will continue to outbid each

other for the whiskey vote until we shall be as completely under the heel of the saloon as they are in many places on the other side. We are fast drifting that way now. Christian citizens beware, it is easier to prevent now, than to cure hereafter. A stand must be made some day and what better time than now?

Our object in sending out this circular is to set before you a plan of action that has already received the approval of many earnest men who have pledged themselves to support it at the polls. It is that all who care more for the welfare of their fellow men than they do for any political party, shall write prohibition across their ballot at the coming election, and shall continue to do so until this extra privilege to ruin and destroy is taken away from the saloons.

If you take this course you will be asked by the wily politician what you expect to gain by it? You can answer that "first I have refused to encourage a great wrong, and second I have shown that there is at least one man who values Christian principle above party loyalty."

Some very ingenious reasons will be advanced why "beer and the Bible" should march arm in arm to the polls. Let us state our position on this question in a few propositions.

1. It is time that Christian people refused to endorse at the polls all the practices of political leaders, meanwhile soothing their consciences by the hope that the evil will be counterbalanced by the good which their party will do when in power. Those who do evil when out of power will do evil in power.

2. We do not believe as some would have us; that we would help the cause of temperance or prohibition by voting with the saloon vote and those that bought them.

3. As Christians, we shall oppose with all our might,
the purchase of votes with the degradation of our citizens.

The beginning of another license year is at hand. Let
Christian people watch and see which has most influence
with the Commissioners, the churches or the saloons.
Correspondence invited.

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